# SAVAGE

# Unitarian Catechism

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# Unitarian Catechism

BY

M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

*REVISED EDITION*

*"The world is saved by the breath of the school-children"*

TALMUD

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# INTRODUCTION.

The preface by Mr. Savage gives the reasons, clearly and concisely, why a book like this is needed. It answers a great demand, and it will supply a serious deficiency. Having had the privilege of reading the contents very thoroughly, I gladly record my satisfaction in the character of the work, my hope of its wide acceptance and use, my appreciation of the author's motives in preparing it. The questions and answers allow of supplementing, of individual handling, of personal direction. It is not a hard-and-fast production. There is a large liberty of detail, explanation and unfolding. The doctrinal positions are in accord with rational religion and liberal Christianity, the critical judgments are based on modern scholarship, and the great aim throughout is to assist an inquirer or pupil to a positive, permanent faith. If any one finds comments and criticisms which at first sight seem needless, let it be remembered that a Unitarian catechism must give reasons, point out errors, and trace causes: it cannot simply dogmatize. I am sure that in the true use of this book great gains will come to our Sunday-schools, to searchers after truth, to our cause.

EDWARD A. HORTON.

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

This is the call for help in the home. Besides this, a similar call has come from the Sunday-school. Multitudes of teachers have little time to consult libraries and study large works. This is an attempt, then, to help them, by putting in their hands, in brief compass, the principal things believed by Unitarians concerning the greatest subjects.

The list of reference books that follows the questions and answers will enable those who wish to do so to go more deeply into the topics suggested.

It is believed that this Catechism will be found adapted to any grade of scholars above the infant class, provided the teacher has some skill in the matter of interpretation.

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# I.

## RELIGION.

1. *Question.* How old is religion?
*Answer.* As old as man.

2. *Q.* What is religion?
*A.* It is man's effort to get into right relations with God.

3. *Q.* Analyze and define religion.
*A.* Man feels himself surrounded by mysterious forces, so

(1) He thinks out some idea or theory of these forces and of himself as related to them.

(2) He has certain feelings and emotions in accord with his thoughts, such as awe, fear, reverence, love.

(3) His thoughts and feelings tend to embody or incarnate themselves, to find some outward expression; so there are altars, temples, sacrifices, scriptures, prayers, hymns, etc. The nature of these always depends on the nature of the thoughts and feelings. Man tries to do what he thinks his God wants him to do; that is, such things as will put him into favorable relations with his God. So we see, (as is said in answer 2), that religion is man's effort to get into right relations with God.

4. *Q.* Why have there been so many religions?
*A.* Because men have had so many ways of thinking

about and interpreting the world and its mysterious forces.

5. *Q.* Have all the religions except Christianity been false?

*A.* No: none of them have been wholly false.

6. *Q.* Is Christianity all true?

*A.* No. Though the best and highest of all religions, it is as yet imperfect.

7. *Q.* What would be a perfect religion?

*A.* One perfectly true in its teachings and perfectly lived out in action.

8. *Q.* When can we hope for such a religion?

*A.* Only when men become perfectly wise and good.

9. *Q.* How can all the religions of the world be divided?

*A.* Into two classes, polytheistic and monotheistic.

10. *Q.* What do these terms mean?

*A.* A polytheist (from two Greek words, πολύς and θεός) is one who believes in many gods. A monotheist (also from two Greek words, μόνος and θεός) is one who believes in only one God.

11. *Q.* Are there any monotheistic religions except Christianity?

*A.* Yes: two, the Jewish and the Mohammedan.

12. *Q.* Why have men believed there were many gods?

*A.* Because they have thought the sun, the lightning, and a hundred other natural forces were separate and superhuman powers. They have also deified dead heroes and ancestors.

13. *Q.* Why have they had such ideas?

*A.* Because they had not yet learned that all forces are manifestations of one power.

14. *Q.* Why are we monotheists?

*A.* Because we have learned the unity of things; that there is only one force, one law, in the universe.

15. *Q.* Can man help being religious?

*A.* In one sense, yes: he can disbelieve in or be opposed to religion. Still, he cannot escape the fact that he is essentially a religious being.

16. *Q.* What do we mean by this?

*A.* We have seen (in answer 3) that man is and must be in some way related to God, whether he is conscious of it or not.

17. *Q.* Is religion important, then?

*A.* It is the most important of all things.

18. *Q.* Why?

*A.* Because on a knowledge of the power manifested in the world about us, and on our being in right relations to it, depend all life, health, prosperity, and happiness.

19. *Q.* Does it make any difference what religion a man believes in?

*A.* It makes all the difference in the world.

20. *Q.* Why?

*A.* Because all practice first or last depends on theory. If one has wrong thoughts and feelings, his action, which springs from these, cannot be right.

21. *Q.* What if his action be not right?

*A.* Then he must fail of the highest well-being and

happiness. If, for instance, a man is to sail over the sea, a false theory of navigation may lead him to miss his harbor. So in all the work of life.

22. *Q.* What are the most important things in religion?

*A.* Right thoughts about God and man, and right feelings.

23. *Q.* Why?

*A.* Because these will lead to right action; that is, to right relations with God.

24. *Q.* Are religious ceremonies and institutions important?

*A.* They are; but they are the product of religion, and not its cause. They need, then, to be rightly understood and used.

25. *Q.* Are they ever an evil?

*A.* Yes, when they stand in the way of growth or in place of the real religious life.

26. *Q.* Give an example.

*A.* Religious ceremonies are of value only as they help on religious life and growth. If, now, a person should allow himself to be unkind or dishonest, and think to make up for it by church attendance or prayers or Bible study, these good things might to him become an evil.

27. *Q.* What religious ceremonies or institutions, then, are good?

*A.* Any that truly express or help on the real religious life.

28. *Q.* What is the essence of true religion for us to-day?

*A.* Love for God and man.

29. *Q.* Why?

*A.* Because, if these exist, they will find fitting ceremonies, create institutions, and deliver the world from evil.

30. *Q.* If one is truly religious, what will be its effect on his life?

*A.* In politics, in society, in his home, and everywhere, he will try to do what is for the happiness and good of all.

## II.

## GOD.

1. *Q.* Have men always believed in God?

*A.* Not in the sense in which we believe to-day; but they have always believed in the existence of certain invisible or spiritual powers.

2. *Q.* What objects have they worshipped as gods?

*A.* First or last, almost everything,— the sun, moon, stars, rivers, trees, different kinds of animals, etc.

3. *Q.* Have they really thought that these things were gods?

*A.* Perhaps the ignorant have, but the more intelligent have looked upon them as the symbols or abiding places of the deity.

4. *Q.* Has there been an element of truth in this?

*A.* Yes; for to-day we believe that all things are partial manifestations of the one infinite spirit and life.

5. *Q.* Did all ancient peoples believe alike in this respect?

*A.* No: different families and tribes have had separate beliefs and different gods.

6. *Q.* Did they believe these gods to be friendly to each other?

*A.* No: the gods hated each other as bitterly as did the people themselves.

7. *Q.* Did they believe all these gods to be good?

*A.* No: they were as different in their tempers and characters as were the people who worshipped them.

8. *Q.* What did these people think the gods were doing?

*A.* Not knowing anything about the order of nature, they attributed everything that happened to the agency of some one of these deities. All the good things were supposed to be caused by the good gods; while all the evil were the work of bad spirits, or of the good spirits when they were angry.

9. *Q.* Did the people worship only the good gods?

*A.* No: they worshipped the evil deities from fear, offering sacrifices in an attempt to buy off their enmity.

10. *Q* What was the origin of their belief in these bad gods?

*A.* It was their way of explaining the existence of suffering, disease, and death.

11. *Q.* Does this explain the origin of all the evil deities?

*A.* No. When one nation conquered another, the gods of that nation also were supposed to be conquered; but, hating their conquerors, they would constantly try to do them harm, and so came to be looked upon as evil spirits.

12. *Q.* Did they at that time believe in any ruler of all the evil spirits, or the devil, in the modern sense of that word?

*A.* No: that idea was much later in its origin.

13. *Q.* How did the belief in one God arise?

*A.* At first, people came to believe that they must

worship only one God, though they did not doubt the existence of other gods. Then they came to believe that theirs was the only real God.

14. *Q.* Who were the first, as a people, to believe in only one God?

*A.* The Hebrews, a few hundred years before Christ.

15. *Q.* Did they have the same idea of the one God that we have to-day?

*A.* No: it was far less spiritual and grand.

16. *Q.* Where did they suppose this one God dwelt?

*A.* In heaven, which they supposed to be just above the sky.

17. *Q.* What did they think of this sky?

*A.* The Old Testament speaks of it as a solid dome or firmament, just above which was heaven, where God was enthroned, surrounded by his angelic court.

18. *Q.* Did they think that God was a visible being, then?

*A.* Yes; and that sometimes he had appeared to men on earth.

19. *Q.* Where did they believe he was to be worshipped?

*A.* Chiefly in the Temple at Jerusalem, in which place they believed was the special manifestation of his presence.

20. *Q.* What did Jesus teach in regard to this?

*A.* He taught that God was spirit, and could be found anywhere by those who worshipped him in spirit and in truth.

21. *Q.* What have men thought about God since the time of Jesus?

*A.* Generally, they have thought of him under the figure of a man, and as enthroned in some special place.

22. *Q.* Can we think of him in this way now?

*A.* No: since we have found out the nature of the universe, we can no longer think of God as wearing a bodily form.

23. *Q.* Where is he, then?

*A.* He is everywhere.

24. *Q.* How, then, can we think of him?

*A.* As the life, the spirit, the soul, of the universe.

25. *Q.* Is not this pantheism?

*A.* No. Pantheism teaches that all things are God: this teaches that God is in and through, and so the life of, all things.

26. *Q.* Can this be illustrated in any way to make it plainer?

*A.* Yes: as an illustration, we may think of God as related to the universe in a similar way to that in which our souls are related to our bodies.

27. *Q.* Where is the soul in the body?

*A.* It is everywhere.

28. *Q.* Shall we ever see God?

*A.* Only as we see him now, as manifested in the life of the universe.

29. *Q.* Is this really seeing him at all?

*A.* Yes: we see him just as truly as we see a friend. No one ever saw the soul: we only see the manifestation of its activity through the body. In the same way precisely we see the manifestation of God through the outer world.

30. *Q.* Is God personal?

*A.* Yes; but not in the sense in which we speak of man as personal.

31. *Q.* Why?

*A.* Because we connect with man's personality the thoughts of a beginning and an end, and of an outlined physical being.

32. *Q.* In what does personality consist?

*A.* Essentially in self-consciousness, and in this, which is the highest sense, we believe that God is personal.

33. *Q.* May we think of God as our Father?

*A.* We may. We, as finite spirits, are children of the Infinite Spirit.

34. *Q.* Is he near to us?

*A.* Nearer than the breath we breathe; for "in him we live and move and have our being."

35. *Q.* Will he help us?

*A.* He does help us always. Since all the forces of the world are his activity, all we do is by the use of his power.

36. *Q.* Is there any idolatry still in Christendom?

*A.* Yes; for an image of God may be in the mind as well as made out of stone or wood.

37. *Q.* Can we have a perfect thought of God?

*A.* No; for the finite cannot grasp the infinite. We must think as truly and nobly as we can.

38. *Q.* Where are God's laws to be found?

*A.* They are the laws of nature and of life.

39. *Q.* Are they in any one book or Church?

*A.* No; and many so-called laws of God are only the imaginations of man.

40. *Q.* What, then, are his laws?

*A.* The real laws of life, of goodness, and of truth.

## III.

## MAN.

1. *Q.* How long has the earth existed?

*A.* Probably millions of years.

2. *Q.* Has it always been inhabited?

*A.* No: it was a very long time before it became cool enough for living forms.

3. *Q.* Did man appear at first?

*A.* No: the lowest forms of life appeared first in the waters.

4. *Q.* What next?

*A.* Next came the fishes, then the reptiles, then the birds, and then the different kinds of animals.

5. *Q.* How long ago did man appear?

*A.* We cannot tell exactly. The best authorities think it was as much as 150,000 years ago, and perhaps 300,000.

6. *Q.* Was he specially created at that time?

*A.* No: he grew or was developed from lower forms.

7. *Q.* Was he perfect when he first appeared?

*A.* No: He was but little above the animals.

8. *Q.* How much has he grown and changed since then?

*A.* So much that the highest man of to-day is more unlike the first man than he was unlike the highest animal.

9. *Q.* Do we, then, believe in "the fall of man"?

*A.* No; for he was never so high as to-day. It is the *ascent* of man that we believe in.

10. *Q.* What, then, is the difference between the animals and man?

*A.* The differences are of two sorts, difference in degree and difference in kind.

11. *Q.* What do we mean by difference in degree?

*A.* Both are animals; but man is a higher kind of animal.

12. *Q.* Explain how.

*A.* In the first place, as to his body. He stands erect, and has hands instead of having four feet. Then he has a much larger brain.

13. *Q.* What of mental differences?

*A.* Animals think, reason, dream, remember, and in many ways show remarkable powers of mind. But men are much superior to them in all these things.

14. *Q.* What is meant by saying they are different in kind?

*A.* While man is an animal, he is also something more, so that he is a different kind of being.

15. *Q.* Explain this.

*A.* A dog or a horse is conscious, but he is not self-conscious. That is, he does not think "I." He never thinks, "I am a horse or a dog, and so I am different from other kinds of animals."

16. *Q.* Explain still further.

*A.* While animals may fear or love a master and even show shame when they have displeased him, there is no reason to think they have a moral nature.

Neither do they possess a religious nature to make them think of and try to find God as man does.

17. *Q.* Is there any other great difference?

*A.* Yes: man has an ideal of a better condition, of a higher kind of life, and so is capable of progress. Animals do not have this.

18. *Q.* What other great difference is there?

*A.* Man has the power of speech. And he can write down and preserve his thoughts and all he has learned and done. So knowledge is kept and handed on from age to age.

19. *Q.* Was speech an invention?

*A.* It was partly an invention and partly a growth.

20. *Q.* What was the condition of the first men?

*A.* They were naked barbarians in the woods. They lived on berries, nuts, fruits, and such animals and fishes as they could capture.

21. *Q.* Tell something more about them.

*A.* They had no houses, no fire, no weapons or tools.

22. *Q.* How did they progress out of this condition?

*A.* They discovered fire, and then they gradually learned how to make themselves huts, boats, weapons, and tools. When they found the metals, and learned how to smelt copper and iron, they made very rapid advances.

23. *Q.* Are there any specimens of the primitive men alive now?

*A.* No; for the lowest savages are very much above the condition of the first men.

24. *Q.* Who were the first peoples to become what we call civilized?

*A.* The oldest civilizations that we know of were in Egypt and Babylonia. But there are remains of civilizations, perhaps as old, in Southern Arabia, Central America, and in Mexico.

25. *Q.* Of what kind were the oldest societies?

*A.* They were tribes of people supposed to be bound together by ties of kinship.

26. *Q.* When did any people first become organized on a territorial basis?

*A.* The ancient Athenians, under Cleisthenes, about 500 years before Christ.

27. *Q.* How did the ancient peoples write?

*A.* They had what is called picture-writing, or hieroglyphs.

28. *Q.* Who first used an alphabet?

*A.* The Phœnicians.

29. *Q.* What has helped the modern world to advance so much more rapidly than the ancient?

*A.* Discoveries such as the mariner's compass, the art of printing, gunpowder, the steam-engine, the telegraph, etc.

30. *Q.* What other advances has man made?

*A.* In mental and moral growth he has kept pace with his physical discoveries.

31. *Q.* Has he reached the end?

*A.* No: he is only beginning to get control of himself and of the forces of the earth.

32. *Q.* What may we hope for, then, in the future?

*A.* A condition of things in which hunger and disease, vice and crime, shall have been outgrown and left behind.

33. *Q.* How is this to be reached?

*A.* By finding out the laws of God and learning to obey them.

34. *Q.* What, then, is our highest duty?

*A.* To do what little we can to bring about this condition of things.

35. *Q.* Is man made in the image of God?

*A.* Yes; for, if not, he could neither know nor love nor serve him.

36. *Q.* What do we mean by his being in God's image?

*A.* He is God's child, and so like him mentally and morally as well as spiritually.

37. *Q.* What, then, ought to be his life?

*A.* It ought to be god-like, growing ever truer and nobler.

38. *Q.* Is such a life natural to man?

*A.* It is the only life that is natural, and so true to man's best possibilities.

## IV.

## BIBLE.

1. *Q.* What is the Bible?

*A.* It is the name given to the books of the Old and New Testaments when spoken of as a whole.

2. *Q.* Where does the word "Bible" come from?

*A.* The Greek. The books were first spoken of as τὰ βιβλία, the books, and then as τὸ βιβλίον, the book.

3. *Q.* What are these books?

*A.* They comprise the most important parts of the religious writings of the Hebrews and the early Christians.

4. *Q.* Why are they all together in one volume?

*A.* For convenience, and because they have been supposed together to make up one revelation.

5. *Q.* How do they happen to be divided into chapters and verses?

*A.* This is the work of publishers, and is only for convenience of reference.

6. *Q.* Where did the running titles and chapter headings come from?

*A.* These are the work of English editors, and are of no authority.

7. *Q.* Where did our ordinary English Bible come from?

*A.* It was translated into English, under King James, early in the seventeenth century.

8. *Q.* Out of what languages was it translated?

*A.* The New Testament out of Greek and the Old Testament out of Hebrew, with the exception of a few passages, which were Aramaic.

9. *Q.* Did the translators have the original books just as they were first written?

*A.* No: only copies made hundreds of years afterwards.

10. *Q.* How were these copies made?

*A.* They were written by hand,—the New Testament by the old monks in monasteries, and the Old by Jewish Scribes.

11. *Q.* How do we know they were correct copies?

*A.* We know that they were not.

12. *Q.* What changes had been made?

*A.* The copyists had made a great many changes in transcribing.

13. *Q.* How important are these changes?

*A.* Generally, they are slight. But, in some cases, they amount to whole verses or parts of chapters.

14. *Q.* Were any of these changes made on purpose?

*A.* There is good reason to think that some of them were.

15. *Q.* Give an illustration.

*A.* 1 John v. 7 and Matt. xvi. 18.

16. *Q.* Are we sure, then, of the verbal accuracy of the Bible?

*A.* No: we are not.

17. *Q.* Do these changes make us doubtful of its main teachings?

*A.* No; for we now know very nearly what the changes have been.

18. *Q.* How many books are there in the Bible?

*A.* 66 : 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New.

19. *Q.* Are the books in the same order in the English Bible that they were in the Hebrew?

*A.* No : the order has been changed.

20. *Q.* Is the order, in either of them, the order in which they were written, or of the events related?

*A.* No : it is not.

21. *Q.* How did the Jews divide the books?

*A.* Into three groups,— the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings.

22. *Q.* What did these include?

*A.* The Law included the Pentateuch ; the Prophets, the books we know now by that name, together with Joshua and Judges ; and the Writings, all the rest.

23. *Q.* What do we know about the authorship of these books?

*A.* Very little. As to most of them, we do not know who wrote them, nor when, nor where they were written.

24. *Q.* How old are they?

*A.* A few fragments date back to perhaps 1300 B.C., but the oldest complete book to not more than 800 B.C.

25. *Q.* Of what date is that part of the Old Testament which was last written?

*A.* Not far from 170 B.C.

26. *Q.* How did the Hebrews regard these books?

*A.* They came to look upon them as an inspired and infallible revelation from God.

27. *Q.* Were these books the only Jewish writings?
*A.* No: many books have been lost.

28. *Q.* Are there any others that have been kept?
*A.* Yes: there are fourteen others, which are called the Apocrypha.

29. *Q.* Why are those not in the Bible?
*A.* Because the Jewish nation was scattered before they had become old enough to be regarded as sacred.

30. *Q.* Have they ever been included in the Bible?
*A.* Yes, by the Catholics; and they are often printed between the Old and New Testaments in our Protestant Bibles.

31. *Q.* Are any of these as good as the books of the Old Testament?
*A.* Yes: a few of them are better than many that are included in the Bible.

32. *Q.* Are there any other old Jewish books?
*A.* Yes: such as the Book of Enoch, which is quoted in the Epistle of Jude.

33. *Q.* Name some as good as those in the Old Testament.
*A.* Ecclesiasticus and The Wisdom of Solomon.

34. *Q.* Of what is the New Testament composed?
*A.* Of four biographies of Jesus, one book of history, twenty-one letters, and one vision, called the Apocalypse,— twenty-seven in all.

35. *Q.* When were these written?
*A.* Probably from about 55 A.D. to 170 A.D.

36. *Q.* Are they arranged in chronological order?
*A.* No.

37. *Q.* Which are oldest?

*A.* The five or six genuine letters of Paul.

38. *Q.* Who wrote the rest of the letters?

*A.* With the exception of James, we do not know.

39. *Q.* Were the Gospels written by the men whose names they bear?

*A.* They were not.

40. *Q.* Which is the oldest?

*A.* Mark.

41. *Q.* How were the first three written?

*A.* Somewhere near the year 70 or 80 A.D. they were written out from notes, memorabilia, etc. Up to that time, the story had only been repeated from memory.

42. *Q.* How could it be remembered so long?

*A.* There were persons called catechists, or teachers, who made it their business to learn and repeat the story.

43. *Q.* Did they remember it with perfect accuracy?

*A.* No; for they often differ, and sometimes contradict each other.

44. *Q.* Who wrote the Fourth Gospel?

*A.* Probably a presbyter by the name of John.

45. *Q.* Are these twenty-seven books all that were written?

*A.* No: many other gospels, letters, and visions were written.

46. *Q.* What became of them?

*A.* Many were lost; and many are still kept, and are called the Apocryphal New Testament.

47. *Q.* Who decided what books should make up the New Testament?

*A.* The general opinion and consent of the churches.

48. *Q.* Are there any among those left out as good as those that were included?

*A.* Perhaps one or two.

49. *Q.* Name one.

*A.* The Shepherd of Hermas. This was included in the New Testament at one time.

50. *Q.* How has the Church in general regarded the Bible as a whole?

*A.* As being an inspired and infallible revelation from God.

51. *Q.* Can we so regard it to-day?

*A.* No; for it contains errors, and we know God could not make mistakes.

52. *Q.* What kind of mistakes are there?

*A.* In some places, it teaches what now we know to be immoral. It also makes mistakes in history and in science. It also contradicts itself in many places.

53. *Q.* What do we mean by mistakes in science?

*A.* Mistakes in astronomy, geology, etc.

54. *Q.* Give an example.

*A.* The Jews thought the earth was flat, and that the sky was a solid dome; also, that the sun and stars were made only to give us light.

55. *Q.* Give another example.

*A.* The creation story.

56. *Q.* What, then, is the Bible?

*A.* It is a record of the religious life and teachings

of the ancient Hebrews and of the early Christian Churches.

57. *Q.* How does it compare with the religious books of other peoples?

*A.* It is the grandest one of them all.

58. *Q.* Does it contain God's word?

*A.* Yes; but only in part and mixed with many errors.

59. *Q.* What is God's perfect word?

*A.* All truth.

60. *Q.* Is revelation finished?

*A.* No: every new truth is a new revelation.

61. *Q.* Does God speak to the world now?

*A.* Yes: to all who listen and try to understand him.

62. *Q.* If the Bible is not perfect, why should we study it?

*A.* In the first place, the literature and art of the world are full of it. We need to be familiar with it so as to understand them.

63. *Q.* Why else?

*A.* Because it teaches us how religion grows and what men have felt and thought about it in the past.

64. *Q.* Is there any other reason?

*A.* Yes: rightly used, it will help our personal religious lives more than any other one book.

65. *Q.* How should we study it?

*A.* With our eyes open to its real nature.

66. *Q.* What is its real nature?

*A.* It is a human book. In some parts, its teaching

is barbarous and cruel, being the work of a barbarous age. It is full of magic and miracle. Most of its writers knew little of God's real way of governing the world.

67. *Q.* Wherein, then, is its great value?

*A.* It shows the growth of religious ideas from barbarism up to the sweet spiritual teaching of Jesus.

68. *Q.* What are the most valuable parts of the Bible?

*A.* Those that tell us of the life and teachings of Jesus.

69. *Q.* How do they help us?

*A.* By showing us that a life like his is possible, and by winning us to love it.

## V.

## JESUS.

1. *Q.* In what year was Jesus born?

*A.* About the year 5 or 4 B.C.

2. *Q.* How could the Christ be born before Christ?

*A.* The date was not fixed at the time, and many years later this mistake was made.

3. *Q.* What time in the year was he born?

*A.* We do not know.

4. *Q.* Was he not born on Christmas Day?

*A.* No: this date was not fixed until four or five hundred years after Jesus was born.

5. *Q.* Why was this date chosen for celebrating his birth?

*A.* Because it was already a popular festival day.

6. *Q.* What kind of day was it?

*A.* Much like our present Christmas. It was the birthday of the Sun-god, and so of the year.

7. *Q.* What did people do on that day?

*A.* They exchanged gifts, and made it a day of human equality and good-will. Slaves were feasted and waited on by their masters.

8. *Q.* Where was Jesus born?

*A.* Probably in Nazareth, a small hill-town in Galilee.

9. *Q.* Why do Matthew and Luke, then, say he was born in Bethlehem?

*A.* These stories about his birth are very late and of no authority. The Jews expected their Messiah to be born in Bethlehem; so, after people came to believe that Jesus was the Messiah, this belief grew up.

10. *Q.* Who were his parents?

*A.* Joseph and Mary.

11. *Q.* What kind of persons were they?

*A.* Simple peasant people. His father was a carpenter.

12. *Q.* Had he brothers or sisters?

*A.* Yes: he was one of a large family.

13. *Q.* What do we know of his childhood?

*A.* Almost nothing, except as we may find out what a Jewish childhood was in those days.

14. *Q.* What did a Jewish child learn?

*A.* He learned in the synagogue to recite the wise sayings of the Old Testament and of the Fathers.

15. *Q.* What language did he speak?

*A.* Aramaic.

16. *Q.* Did he learn any science or philosophy?

*A.* No: his people at that time had no knowledge of science, and did not think of the world as under natural law.

17. *Q.* Do his biographers tell us nothing about his childhood?

*A.* There is just one story in Luke. This tells us how his parents took him to Jerusalem to the temple when he was twelve years old.

18. *Q.* Why did they take him there then?

*A.* It was a Jewish custom,—a little like confirmation in some modern churches.

19. *Q.* How does he appear in this story?

*A.* As a precocious child, but loving and obedient.

20. *Q.* What does Luke say of him on his return home?

*A.* He "increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man."

21. *Q.* When do we next see him?

*A.* At about the age of thirty, when he comes to John the Baptist to be baptized.

22. *Q.* What then does he do?

*A.* After John's imprisonment, he begins to travel over the country preaching, and announcing that the kingdom of God is at hand.

23. *Q.* What was meant by "the kingdom of God"?

*A.* The Jews had come to believe that God was going to set up, by miracle and suddenly, a perfect condition of things on earth.

24. *Q.* Did Jesus travel alone?

*A.* No: he chose twelve friends, called "apostles," some of whom were generally with him.

25. *Q.* How did they live?

*A.* They were entertained by friends as they travelled over the country.

26. *Q.* Was this a strange thing to do?

*A.* No: in that age, country, and climate it was simple and natural.

27. *Q.* Can we follow the order of his journeys and teachings?

*A.* No; for the stories are not clear.

28. *Q.* How long was his ministry?

*A.* Probably only a little over a year; though John seems to make it three and a half. There was even a later tradition that said he lived to be fifty years old.

29. *Q.* Into what parts may his public life be divided?

*A.* Into two, his work in Galilee and in Judea.

30. *Q.* Where did he preach?

*A.* On the lake-side, from a boat, on hill-slopes, or in any convenient place.

31. *Q.* How did he preach?

*A.* In a simple, conversational way, drawing his lessons from flowers, leaven, the farmer's work, as well as from Scripture.

32. *Q.* Did he deliver any long sermons?

*A.* Probably not. The Sermon on the Mount was not all spoken at any one time or place.

33. *Q.* How else did he teach?

*A.* Often in parables; that is, by telling stories with a lesson that people would remember.

34. *Q.* How was he received?

*A.* The people were glad to hear him.

35. *Q.* How did he differ from common teachers.

*A.* They were generally dry and formal in their methods.

36. *Q.* What did they teach?

*A.* The law of Moses and the traditions.

37. *Q.* What did he teach?

*A.* God's love and human duty.

38. *Q.* Whom did he choose for associates?

*A.* Generally the common people.

39. *Q.* What was his disposition?

*A.* He was tender and loving, always ready to help and comfort.

40. *Q.* Was he ever severe?

*A.* Only towards people who were hard and proud and who looked down on their fellow-men.

41. *Q.* Who did he say were fit for the kingdom of God?

*A.* Those who left off their wrong-doing, and were loving and helpful like himself.

42. *Q.* Did he make any other condition?

*A.* No: he did not.

43. *Q.* Who represented the state religion of his time?

*A.* The Priests, the Pharisees, and the Scribes.

44. *Q.* Did they like him?

*A.* No.

45. *Q.* Why?

*A.* Because he disregarded their rules and customs, saying, if people were only loving and helpful, it did not matter about these other things.

46. *Q.* Why did this trouble them?

*A.* Because they believed God had commanded them to keep up the temple, the law, and all their ceremonies; and also because, if he had his way, their business and importance would be gone.

47. *Q.* What did they do about it?

*A.* They stirred up the people against him, and made them believe he was an enemy of God, and so their enemy.

48. *Q.* What else did they do?

*A.* They made the Roman authorities who then governed the country believe that he was getting up a rebellion.

49. *Q.* Had there been rebellions before?

*A.* Yes, many; so that the Romans were sensitive on the subject.

50. *Q.* Was there any ground for these charges?

*A.* None, except that he preached the kingdom of God. But they saw that this did threaten their power over the people; and they made the Romans suspicious.

51. *Q.* When did they mature their plans?

*A.* At the great annual feast, when they knew Jesus would be in Jerusalem.

52. *Q.* How did they carry them out?

*A.* They hired Judas, one of his apostles, to betray Jesus into their hands.

53. *Q.* What then did they do?

*A.* They tried him before the Sanhedrin, the great Jewish court.

54. *Q.* Did they prove their charges?

*A.* It mattered little to them whether they did or not. They were determined to get rid of him.

55. *Q.* Could they put him to death?

*A.* No: they had to get the consent of Pilate, the Roman ruler.

56. *Q.* Did Pilate think him guilty?

*A.* Probably not; but it made little difference to him, so that he satisfied the people.

57. *Q.* What then did they do with Jesus?

*A.* They put a crown of thorns on his head, a purple robe on his shoulders, and a reed in his hand, because they said he claimed to be a king; for crown, robe, and sceptre were symbols of royalty.

58. *Q.* Did he claim to be king?

*A.* Only by a figure of speech, to be a king of the truth.

59. *Q.* What next?

*A.* They crucified him on a little hill outside the city walls.

60. *Q.* Where was he buried?

*A.* In a new tomb, hewn out of the rock, in a garden belonging to Joseph of Arimathea.

61. *Q.* Did he rise again from the dead?

*A.* There is no reason to suppose his body lived again.

62. *Q.* Why did the disciples, then, claim that they saw him after his death?

*A.* Perhaps they did see him in his spiritual body.

63. *Q.* On what day is his supposed resurrection celebrated?

*A.* On Easter Day.

64. *Q.* Why?

*A.* Because, like Christmas, this had been long celebrated in a similar way.

65. *Q.* What was meant by this day before it became a Christian festival?

*A.* It was celebrated as the day of the spring's coming to life after the death of the winter.

66. *Q.* When did the stories of the miraculous birth and resurrection of Jesus grow up.

*A.* Long after his death.

67. *Q.* Did Jesus work miracles?

*A.* Not in the sense of disregarding natural laws.

68. *Q.* Did he possess any wonderful powers?

*A.* Probably he did, especially in the soothing and cure of those afflicted with nervous diseases.

69. *Q.* Have others had similar powers?

*A.* Yes: many others.

70. *Q.* How, then, did these stories grow up?

*A.* As in the case of Gautama and a great many others. People have always told wonderful stories of the wonderful men they have come to admire and worship.

71. *Q.* Have stories of a virgin birth and miraculous powers been told of others?

*A.* Yes: of many others. They were told of Gautama, of Plato, of Cæsar, of Apollonius, and also of many Catholic saints.

72. *Q.* Did the people of those days care for proof?

*A.* No: they easily believed any story that pleased them.

73. *Q.* Why?

*A.* Because they had not yet learned of the order and law of the natural world.

74. *Q.* What kind of man was Jesus?

*A.* He was the great radical reformer and leader of his age.

75. *Q.* What was his teaching?

*A.* He taught very little that was wholly new, but he taught with such simplicity and force as to make a great impression.

76. *Q.* What is his rank among men?

*A.* He is the greatest religious leader of the world.

77. *Q.* What was his character?

*A.* He was so full of the spirit and love of God, and he so loved men, that he seems to us to have been very nearly perfect.

78. *Q.* Did he establish any church?

*A.* He did not. If correctly reported, he expected to return soon after his death, and with the angels as escort to establish the kingdom of God on earth.

79. *Q.* Did Jesus teach science or politics or help solve great social questions?

*A.* No: he shared the belief of his age and his people concerning all such matters.

80. *Q.* What was that?

*A.* That at "the end of the age" God would suddenly and miraculously establish his kingdom.

81. *Q.* Did he help the world, then, to settle any great intellectual problem?

*A.* No: his greatness was that of character and spiritual insight.

82. *Q.* Should we speak of him as Jesus, or Christ?

*A.* As Jesus. The Christ, or the Messiah, is the name of the title that was given him, not his personal name.

83. *Q.* What is Jesus to us to-day?

*A.* Our great spiritual inspiration and example.

84. *Q.* In what sense is he our Saviour?

*A.* As he helps us to love God and man, and so to try to be like him.

85. *Q.* Is it enough to know the right way?

*A.* No: we must love it, so as to be willing to work or even die for it.

86. *Q.* Why does Jesus say that love is the most important of all things?

*A.* Because love is the great motive power that leads to the doing of all great and good things.

87. *Q.* Shall we call ourselves Christians, then?

*A.* Yes: if we mean by it that we are followers of Jesus' spirit of love to God and man.

## VI.

## EVIL AND DEVIL.

1. *Q.* What do we mean by evil?
*A.* All wrong and suffering.

2. *Q.* What is the old belief about these?
*A.* That they did not exist at first.

3. *Q.* How has their origin been explained?
*A.* As the result of the fall of man.

4. *Q.* What is the story?
*A.* That man was made perfect and placed in the Garden of Eden.

5. *Q.* How was he said to have lost it?
*A.* It is said that the devil, in the form of a serpent, tempted Eve.

6. *Q.* Then what is said to have happened?
*A.* Adam and Eve were driven out of the garden. Then people began to suffer and die.

7. *Q.* Who was this devil?
*A.* At first, they said, he was a bright archangel; that is, an angel-leader.

8. *Q.* How did he come to be the devil?
*A.* It was said he rebelled against God in heaven, and was cast down to hell.

9. *Q.* Why did he tempt Eve?
*A.* It was believed he did it to spite God and injure his new-made world.

10. *Q.* Did the Jews at first believe in the devil?

*A.* Not in the modern sense of the word.

11. *Q.* When did they begin to believe in him?

*A.* We find the idea fully developed after the captivity and their contact with Babylonian and Persian thought. The Devil first appears by name in Wisdom of Solomon, about 200 B.C.

12. *Q.* Why did they accept this idea?

*A.* Because they came to think the good God could not have permitted evil, therefore that some evil being must have caused it.

13. *Q.* Is this a satisfactory explanation?

*A.* No; for, if God could not permit evil, he would not have permitted the devil to exist.

14. *Q.* Is there any reason for believing in the existence of the devil?

*A.* No, none whatever. The stories about him do not prove his existence any more than the stories about Hercules prove his.

15. *Q.* What have people believed about the devil?

*A.* That he and his wicked angels were everywhere, doing all sorts of mischief.

16. *Q.* What kinds of mischief?

*A.* Such as causing sickness and storms.

17. *Q.* Have they thought that people could have anything to do with the devil?

*A.* Yes: as in the case of Faust, and the witches. They thought men and women could make bargains with him, and that sometimes they sold their souls to him for wealth or power.

18. *Q.* Is evil a thing that came into the world?

*A.* No.

19. *Q.* What is it?

*A.* It is simply the result of not knowing and keeping God's laws.

20. *Q.* How long has it existed?

*A.* Since life existed on earth.

21. *Q.* What is pain?

*A.* A feeling we do not like.

22. *Q.* What is the cause of it?

*A.* Any creature that can feel at all must be liable to feel pain as well as pleasure. And pain is the result of a broken law of God.

23. *Q.* If people were perfect, would there be pain?

*A.* No; or, at any rate, very little. If they knew all God's laws, and kept them, they would not suffer.

24. *Q.* Does pain, then, prove that a person is wicked?

*A.* By no means. For we may break God's laws without knowing it, or other people may put us in positions where we have to suffer.

25. *Q.* Is death an evil?

*A.* No: a premature or cruel death may be.

26. *Q.* Was death caused by sin?

*A.* No: it is as natural to die as to be born.

27. *Q.* What are the greatest evils of the world?

*A.* The wrongs men do to one another.

28. *Q.* Do these need to exist?

*A.* No: they exist because people are ignorant, passionate, and selfish.

29. *Q.* Is a person ever better off for injuring another?

*A.* No: selfishness is always foolish as well as wrong.

30. *Q.* What is selfishness?

*A.* Being willing to get something we wish at the expense of the welfare or happiness of somebody else.

31. *Q.* Is it wrong to wish for all good things?

*A.* No: it is wrong only when you are willing to hurt some other person in getting them?

32. *Q.* Is it God's will that men should suffer?

*A.* No.

33. *Q.* Why, then, does he not prevent it?

*A.* We can learn good and evil only by experience; therefore God must permit evil, even if we suffer.

34. *Q.* Must people always suffer?

*A.* Only until they learn how to live rightly.

35. *Q.* Do suffering and death, then, make it impossible to believe in the goodness of God?

*A.* No: not if we understand them and their use.

36. *Q.* Are they, then, any sign that God is angry with us?

*A.* No: God is never angry with anybody.

37. *Q.* What, then, are the causes of all evil?

*A.* Ignorance, passion, and folly.

38. *Q.* Do we need any devil, then, to explain them?

*A.* No.

39. *Q.* God, then, does not wish us to suffer?

*A.* No: he wishes us to learn the right way, and escape all evil.

## VII.

## SALVATION.

1. *Q.* What is salvation?

*A.* It is right relation to God and man.

2. *Q.* What have the "Orthodox" Churches taught about man?

*A.* That he was lost and ruined, under the curse and wrath of God, and doomed to an endless hell.

3. *Q.* How have they said he came to be so?

*A.* As the result of Adam's sin.

4. *Q.* How?

*A.* They have said God arranged things so that the whole race is born depraved and lost.

5. *Q.* What is the story?

*A.* The story of Adam and Eve, created perfect and placed in Eden. When tempted by Satan, they fell; and so all their children are born fallen and wicked.

6. *Q.* What have they taught that God did?

*A.* As the years went by, he chose one little people to teach and train into preparation for the coming of his Son, who was to be the Saviour of those who accepted him.

7. *Q.* What then?

*A.* All the rest of the world was left in darkness and death for 4,000 years.

8. *Q.* Then what?

*A.* He sent his Son, the second person of the trinity, to be born of a virgin, to suffer and die.

9. *Q.* What are some of the other "Orthodox" teachings?

*A.* A miraculous and infallible revelation; that Jesus was God; that the Church was made up of those only who accepted their teachings; that those who did accept them went to heaven at death, and those who did not went to hell.

10. *Q.* Which is the most important of these doctrines?

*A.* The Fall of Man; for, but for that, the rest would never have existed.

11. *Q.* What do we believe to-day as to these things?

*A.* We do not believe only, we know that there never was any fall of man.

12. *Q.* What, then, becomes of the rest of these doctrines?

*A.* There is no need of them.

13. *Q.* Did the early Jews believe them?

*A.* No: Eden is first mentioned in Ezek. xxviii. 13–16. Its origin is probably Babylonian, and its date not far from 570 B.C.

14. *Q.* Did Jesus himself believe them?

*A.* No: he never taught any of them.

15. *Q.* Did he not say that God was his father?

*A.* Yes; and he also said that God was the father of all men.

16. *Q.* What do we now know about man?

*A.* That he has developed from lower forms of life; has been on earth 200,000 or 300,000 years; and has never fallen.

17. *Q.* Does he need to be saved, then?

*A.* No: not in the sense that he is under God's wrath and is doomed to hell.

18. *Q.* What does he need?

*A.* He needs to be educated and trained, taught how to live.

19. *Q.* Is there no hell, then?

*A.* Only the hell of suffering, in this world or any other, that is caused by doing wrong.

20. *Q.* What is there, then, to be saved from?

*A.* Ignorance and passion and selfishness.

21. *Q.* Will this lead us to heaven?

*A.* Being delivered from these will be heaven.

22. *Q.* Can a wicked person enter heaven?

*A.* No: no more than a broken piano can make music.

23. *Q.* Is heaven a place, then?

*A.* There may be many places called heaven; but essentially it is in the soul. Being in a fine house does not make a miserable child happy.

24. *Q.* What is salvation, then?

*A.* It is right character.

25. *Q.* But if one has been leading a wrong life, what should he do?

*A.* Stop doing wrong and begin to do right.

26. *Q.* Will God forgive our wrong-doing?

*A.* In one sense, yes; in another, no.

27. *Q.* How is this?

*A.* We may become reconciled to God, but that does not wipe out the results of our wrong actions?

28. *Q.* What can we do about that?

*A.* So far as possible, we should repair the wrong we have done.

29. *Q.* Why?

*A.* Because, if I have injured another, asking God to forgive me is not enough. I must, if I can, undo the wrong.

30. *Q.* Can one be saved alone?

*A.* No.

31. *Q.* Why not?

*A.* Because the welfare and happiness of one depend on the welfare and happiness of all.

32. *Q.* How so?

*A.* One who loves his fellow-men can never be perfectly happy so long as evil and suffering exist.

## VIII.

## CHURCH.

1. *Q.* What is the Church?

*A.* It is the Greek ἐκκλησία, a congregation.

2. *Q.* How old is the Church?

*A.* It was organized immediately after the death of Jesus.

3. *Q.* Did the Jews have anything like churches?

*A.* Yes: the synagogues. There was one in every town; and, in the large cities, many of them.

4. *Q.* What did they do in them?

*A.* They read and explained the law.

5. *Q.* Are they related in any way to the churches?

*A.* Yes: the churches were copied from them, and but for them might not have existed.

6. *Q.* What were the churches?

*A.* Voluntary associations of men and women to study, teach, and practise Christianity.

7. *Q.* Were there at first any bishops, or rulers?

*A.* No: only the apostles were naturally looked up to and followed.

8. *Q.* How did the churches grow and change?

*A.* As they multiplied, they naturally fell into groups with overseers, who came to be called presbyters, or elders, and then bishops.

9. *Q.* What does bishop mean?

*A.* Only an overseer.

10. *Q.* How did the Catholic Church rise?

*A.* After the Roman empire became Christian, the bishops of Rome (the capital) naturally had more power than the others.

11. *Q.* When did the Roman empire become Christian?

*A.* Early in the fourth century, under the Emperor Constantine.

12. *Q.* Was he a good man?

*A.* No.

13. *Q.* Why, then, did he call himself a Christian?

*A.* So many of his subjects had become Christians that it was policy for him to do so.

14. *Q.* How far did the Romish Church spread?

*A.* Nearly over the civilized world.

15. *Q.* Who was the head of the Church?

*A.* The Pope, so named from a Latin word meaning Father.

16. *Q.* Did the Church keep to the simple life and teaching of Jesus?

*A.* No: it became a great empire, with the Pope as prince. He claimed to be God's vicegerent on earth.

17. *Q.* Were people free to think and study?

*A.* No: all heretics were persecuted and punished.

18. *Q.* Who was a heretic?

*A.* Any one who refused to accept any of the Church's teaching.

19. *Q.* How long did the Church thus rule Europe?

*A.* Until the sixteenth century.

20. *Q.* What happened then?

*A.* What is called the Reformation.

21. *Q.* Who led in this?

*A.* A monk named Luther.

22. *Q.* What was the result?

*A.* A large falling away from the Catholic Church, and the growth of the many sects called Protestant.

23. *Q.* Why were they called Protestants?

*A.* Because at the Second Diet of Spire the minority, in behalf of religious liberty, protested against the action of the majority.

24. *Q.* What are the principal Protestant Churches?

*A.* Lutherans in Germany, the Church of England in England, Presbyterians in Scotland and America, the Congregationalists, Baptists, Methodists, etc.

25. *Q.* What other name have all these Churches?

*A.* They are called "Orthodox."

26. *Q.* What does "Orthodox" mean?

*A.* It is from a Greek word (ὀρθόδοξος), and means the true doctrine.

27. *Q.* What are others called?

*A.* Heretics.

28. *Q.* What does this mean?

*A.* It is from a Greek word, and means the act of choosing. So a heretic is one who thinks freely,—chooses his belief.

29. *Q.* Are we Unitarians heretics?

*A.* Yes, from the point of view of the "Orthodox." But we believe we are orthodox, in the true meaning of the word, because we think we hold and teach the true doctrine.

30. *Q.* How do the orthodox churches differ among themselves?

*A.* Chiefly as to ceremonies and forms of government.

31. *Q.* What ceremonies and forms of government may Unitarians have?

*A.* Any they please. Their forms of church government, however, are generally congregational or democratic.

32. *Q.* How old is Unitarianism?

*A.* The Jews were Unitarian. So were Jesus and the apostles.

33. *Q.* What do we mean by that?

*A.* That they believed in the unity of God, and not in the trinity. We do not mean that they held all our present beliefs.

34. *Q.* How old is modern Unitarianism?

*A.* There were many Unitarians at the time of the Reformation. In Hungary there has been a Unitarian church ever since that time.

35. *Q.* When did the most modern movement of Unitarianism begin?

*A.* In England and America, late in the eighteenth century.

36. *Q.* Who was the first Unitarian preacher in England?

*A.* Rev. Dr. Lindsey. Milton, Newton, Locke, and Priestley were Unitarians.

37. *Q.* Who was the first Unitarian in America?

*A.* Rev. Dr. James Freeman, of King's Chapel. Adams, Franklin, Jefferson, and others, perhaps including Washington, were practically Unitarians.

38. *Q.* Who have been our most famous leaders in this country?

*A.* Channing and Parker.

39. *Q.* What is the fundamental principle of Unitarianism?

*A.* Freedom to study and believe what seems reasonable.

40. *Q.* What are our principal beliefs?

*A.* In the oneness of God as opposed to the trinity, in his perfect goodness, in the ascent of man as opposed to the fall, in the humanity of Jesus as opposed to his deity, in the Bible as a natural as opposed to a supernatural book, in man's salvation through character as opposed to salvation by creed or sacrament, in the final salvation of all men by their being led to see and obey the truth as opposed to an endless hell.

41. *Q.* Ought people to belong to the Church?

*A.* Yes, to the best Church known, because the Church is an organization to help people to find and live out the truth.

42. *Q.* Is there any one true Church?

*A.* No: that Church is the best which finds and practises the most truth.

43. *Q.* Why are we Unitarians?

*A.* Because Unitarian doctrines seem to us most nearly true, and because we have freedom to study and find new truth.

44. *Q.* Is it wrong to leave the Unitarian Church for the older Churches?

*A.* We believe it is.

45. *Q.* Why?

*A.* Because it is not following God, who is leading the world on to new and higher truth.

46. *Q.* Is not the majority more likely to be right?

*A.* No: in education, in science, in philanthropy, it is always the few who lead; as in an army the vanguard is always smaller than the main body.

47. *Q.* What, then, should we chiefly care for?

*A.* To have the most truth, and help to lead and lift the world. Jesus and all the great leaders of the past were in the minority.

## IX.

## DUTY.

1. *Q.* What is duty?

*A.* It is what one owes or ought to do.

2. *Q.* What ought one to do?

*A.* All that is right, and nothing that is wrong.

3. *Q.* What does right mean?

*A.* That which is according to an accepted rule or standard?

4. *Q.* What is this rule or standard?

*A.* There have been a good many arbitrary and mistaken ones.

5. *Q.* What are some of these?

*A.* The Church of Rome says her doctrines; the Protestants say the Bible. Different peoples and different stages of civilization have had different ideas.

6. *Q.* Give another illustration.

*A.* Sometimes society has its notions of what is proper, and will forgive real wrongs sooner than disregard of its rules.

7. *Q.* Is there a real rule?

*A.* Yes.

8. *Q.* What is it?

*A.* It is found in the word "life."

9. *Q.* How so?

*A.* That which conduces to the life and well-being of mankind is right.

10. *Q.* What is wrong, then?

*A.* That which injures and tends to destroy well-being and life.

11. *Q.* What have people agreed to call vices and wrongs?

*A.* Those things which they have learned by experience to think injurious.

12. *Q.* Have they always had correct ideas of what was right and wrong?

*A.* No: the principle has always been the same; but men's ideas about it have not.

13. *Q.* Are the same actions always right or always wrong?

*A.* No: because circumstances may change the effect of them.

14. *Q.* How have people found out what was right and wrong?

*A.* By experience; just as they have discovered what is good to eat and what is poison.

15. *Q.* Is right in accordance with the will of God?

*A.* Always.

16. *Q.* Does that will make right?

*A.* No: right is eternal. No power can change it.

17. *Q.* Are all God's laws right?

*A.* Yes; for they are the conditions of life and well-being.

18. *Q.* What is the penalty of wrong?

*A.* Suffering and death.

19. *Q.* Could God change this?

*A.* No: no more than he could make a person sick and well at the same time.

20. *Q.* Did the world need a supernatural revelation to teach it what was right?

*A.* No: it learned by experience.

21. *Q.* Have nations outside of the Hebrew and Christian known the right?

*A.* Yes: equally civilized people have had very much the same ideas of right and wrong.

22. *Q.* What does this mean?

*A.* It means that they have had about the same experiences and so have learned about the same things.

23. *Q.* Does it ever pay to do wrong?

*A.* No: it is always foolish.

24. *Q.* Why do people, then, do wrong?

*A.* Sometimes from ignorance; sometimes under the influence of passion, such as hatred or envy; sometimes for what promises a present pleasure and in spite of after consequences.

25. *Q.* Why ought I to do right toward others?

*A.* Because I have no right to injure them.

26. *Q.* Ought I to do right for my own sake?

*A.* Yes: if I care for well-being and life; and, besides, one can never do a wrong to himself without injuring somebody else.

27. *Q.* Is there any necessary wrong in the world?

*A.* No: except in the sense that it is the necessary result of ignorance, passion, and selfishness.

28. *Q.* How can the world then get rid of wrong?
*A.* By learning what is right, and doing it.

29. *Q.* Is it enough to teach people what is right?
*A.* No: they must learn to love it.

30. *Q.* Why?
*A.* Because love never willingly injures any one.

31. *Q.* Is love alone enough?
*A.* No: one must know the way and then love to walk in it. So knowledge and love both are needed.

## X.

## DEATH AND AFTER.

1. *Q.* What is death?

*A.* It is the ceasing of our bodily life.

2. *Q.* Is it a punishment for sin?

*A.* No: it existed among the lower animals before there were any men to do wrong.

3. *Q.* Why did it come into the world?

*A.* It is the law of all organized creatures that they must die as well as be born.

4. *Q.* Is it an evil?

*A.* No: as things are in this world, it would be much worse if there were no death.

5. *Q.* Does it take away from the world's happiness?

*A.* No: there is much more happiness with it.

6. *Q.* How is this?

*A.* If there were no death, the world would soon be crowded with all sorts of creatures as well as with men.

7. *Q.* Then what?

*A.* No more could be born, and so no more could experience the joy of living. Life is like a feast. If the first tableful sat there forever, no more could come.

8. *Q.* What makes people dread death?

*A.* Largely the old teachings about the next world.

9. *Q.* What else?

*A.* The sickness and pain connected with it.

10. *Q.* Anything else?

*A.* Yes: the separation from friends.

11. *Q.* Are these any real part of dying?

*A.* No: the fears of the future are chiefly imaginary. The pain and illness need not exist when people learn to live rightly; and the separation is only for a little while.

12. *Q.* What ought death, then, to be?

*A.* A happy rebirth into another life when through with this.

13. *Q.* Ought so many people to die so soon?

*A.* No: it is because we do not know or keep the laws of health.

14. *Q.* Can we hope that so much illness, pain, and early dying may be outgrown?

*A.* We may.

15. *Q.* Then what will dying be?

*A.* Like going to sleep when one has grown tired.

16. *Q.* Is death the end?

*A.* No: we believe it is only another kind of birth.

17. *Q.* Does death change one's character?

*A.* No: no more than a night's sleep does.

18. *Q.* Are there special places called heaven and hell?

*A.* No: each soul is happy or unhappy according to character.

19. *Q.* Can one find happiness after death except by being and doing right?

*A.* No: this is the only way.

20. *Q.* Where do those who die, go?

*A.* Probably not far away.

21. *Q.* Is there some special planet for their home?

*A.* Probably not. The spiritual world may be very near us; and perhaps its inhabitants can go from place to place as duty or pleasure lead.

22. *Q.* Do spirits have forms or bodies?

*A.* Probably: only of a kind that we know little or nothing of as yet.

23. *Q.* Why do we not know?

*A.* Knowledge is limited by experience; and as yet we have had no experience to teach us these things.

24. *Q.* What do these spiritual beings do?

*A.* Study and live their own lives as we do here. They may also serve, influence, and help us in many ways, though we do not see them.

25. *Q.* Ought we to dread dying, then?

*A.* No: after we have learned what earth has to teach us, we ought to anticipate going on and up to this higher life.

26. *Q.* Whom shall we find there?

*A.* All the great and noble of all past ages. Also, our own loved ones who have gone.

27. *Q.* Death, then, is not a sign of God's anger with us?

*A.* No: it is one of God's gifts to his children.

28. *Q.* Have we, then, nothing to fear in dying?

*A.* Only the natural consequences of our actions, the same as here.

29. *Q.* Will it be better with some when they die than with others?

*A.* Yes: it will be best for those who have lived best here.

30. *Q.* Why?

*A.* Just as it is best, on going out into life, for that boy or girl who has made the best preparation for it.

31. *Q.* What, then, is the chief end of man?

*A.* To learn to live rightly; for this means good in this world and in all worlds.

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